

Nez Perce Tribe. The park also holds archival material (including the Nez Perce Allotment Book) as well as an extensive historic photograph collection.

The management of the museum collection at the park represents a true cooperative venture between the National Park Service and the Nez Perce Tribe. The park realizes that many of the objects in the collections have special significance to the Nez Perce, and actively promotes the use of the collections by tribal members. The Seven-Drums Society performs an annual ceremony to assure the continued spiritual health of the items in the collection, and the people who work there. There is a continuous use of the ethnographic material by individuals researching traditional clothing styles and beadwork patterns, as there is of the historic photographs. Many Nez Perce have also located photos of their grandparents and great-grandparents in the photo collections. The archival collection has established linear descent for such things as land claims, and early sound recordings in the archives serve to document specific chants and dances.

Recently, Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Washington, dedicated a reconstruction of the 1844 building used by the Hudson Bay Company to process and store furs for shipment to

Great Britain. The Fur Store features a reconstructed fur press and sample pelts, but most of the building contains a modern curatorial facility that will house a study collection of archeological-material from at least four Hudson Bay Company sites in the Columbia Cascades Cluster.

Included in this study collection will be material from Fort Vancouver, Fort Colville, Fort Nez Perce, and Bellevue Farm, all Hudson Bay Company sites within park boundaries in the Columbia Cascades Cluster. After the collections are transferred and installed, about two million objects will be available for comparison and study.

The Center also contains a public interpretive exhibit illustrating the archeological and curatorial methods that establish comparative collections. This exhibit area features a "window wall" that looks into the center's curatorial laboratory and collection processing area, allowing the public a seldom seen glimpse of object preservation and cataloging work in progress.

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The use of objects, specimens, and artifacts comes with pitfalls as well as rewards. Although the National Park Service has been using collections for years for documentation, research, and exhibits, there are still countless ways that we can continue to use them and learn from the experience of others. Not all of the examples in the following articles can be universally applied, but all can be used as springboards to trigger new ideas, sharing the wealth of experience among museum curators.

Bess Gibbs

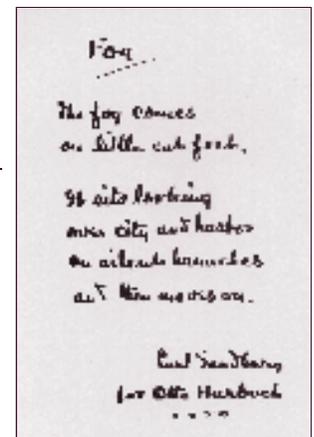
A Used Collection Still in Use

More than 12,000 books fill the floor-to-ceiling shelves that cover walls in every room of the house, except the kitchen. Magazines and journals are in piles on the floor and table tops, newspaper and magazine clippings overflow cardboard boxes from the grocery store, and letters, papers, and handwritten notes fill drawers and organizers in the writer's upstairs study. It is the lifetime accumulation¹ of writer Carl Sandburg who moved in 1945 to Connemara, an antebellum

estate in Flat Rock, North Carolina.

This move was the beginning of a major departure from the past for Carl Sandburg. After a lifetime spent in the mid-west and almost 20 years in the Michigan dune country, the "Chicago" poet was moving south. Sandburg was born and grew up in Galesburg,

*Carl Sandburg
poem courtesy Carl
Sandburg Home
National Historic
Site.*



Illinois, worked in Wisconsin for the Social Democratic Party, and moved to Chicago in 1912 where he worked as a newspaper reporter and later became famous as “The Poet of The People,” and biographer of Abraham Lincoln. In 1928, the Sandburgs moved to a “Tom Thumb” size farm in Harbert, Michigan, on the Lake Michigan shore. Mrs. Sandburg began breeding and showing pure bred dairy goats and became active in dairy goat associations. From his home in Harbert, Sandburg commuted to Chicago and his job as a movie critic for the *Chicago Daily News*. He traveled the country lecturing on Abraham Lincoln, reading his poetry, and singing folksongs from his book *The American Songbag*. He resigned from the *Daily News* in the early 1930s and devoted his time exclusively to writing and lecturing.

Carl Sandburg's upstairs study. Photo by Phil Smith, courtesy Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site.



The Sandburgs were happy in Michigan, but Mrs. Sandburg wanted a place with pastures for the goats, milder winters, and privacy and solitude for her husband. He told her to find the place she wanted and he would go. She found the place in western North Carolina in the village of Flat Rock (named for a granite outcropping where early settlers and Indians met to trade). The move south was begun in late 1945. Forty-two thousand pounds of “cargo” including household goods, books, and papers left Michigan by railroad box-car bound for Hendersonville, a small town near Flat Rock.

That “cargo” in several buildings on 263 acres is now the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site which opened to the public in 1974. Since that time the collection of over 220,000 objects has been used and researched by park staff, volunteers, other museums, domestic and foreign television companies, and publishers of books, magazines, newspapers, and other periodicals.

Each year more than 50,000 visitors tour the Sandburg Home. Most of them are amazed by the collection of books and other documentary material in the home and some are literally captivated by it. One such person was Penelope Niven who first explored Connemara as a visitor in 1976. Following that visit she wrote to Superintendent Benjamin Davis to ask if she could work with the collection offering as credentials a master's degree in American literature and several years of teaching experience. Superintendent Davis responded there was no money to pay her but she was welcome to come as a volunteer. Ms. Niven sorted through thousands of letters, unpublished manuscripts, and journals at Connemara. She came back every summer through 1983, and from this beginning she went on to record an oral history of Carl Sandburg and write *Carl Sandburg A Biography*, published in 1991.

Another volunteer who came to Connemara and later wrote a book using research from the collection was Kathleen Byrne, museum aid at the Sandburg Home in the 1980s and now staff curator in the Museum Management program of the National Park Service at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Mrs. Byrne came to Connemara to research Mrs. Sandburg's goat records for a freelance article on her Chikaming herd, one of the finest goat herds in the country. Sandburg had long been famous as a writer but little was known about his brilliant wife, Lilian Paula Sandburg, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Chicago. Byrne's book, *Paula Sandburg's Chikaming Goat Herd*, was published in 1991.

Park interpreters, more than anyone else, use the collection everyday as they guide visitors through the home and present programs of Sandburg poetry, biography, and give walking tours of the grounds. Park staff have used material from the collection for the publication of several books and booklets. Former Animal Caretaker Mercedes Weitzen and this author collaborated on *The Carl Sandburg Home Activities Book For Children*, a very popular selection in the park bookstore. It contains crossword puzzles, dot-to-dot, word games, coloring pages, and other activities that relate to Carl Sandburg's works for children such as *The Rootabaga Stories* and *Abe Lincoln Grows Up*. This book is used by elementary school teachers in preparing children for visits to the Carl Sandburg Home.

Another source for school teachers is the Teacher's Packet written by Park Ranger Bill Berry and this author. It contains a teacher preparation sheet, a biography of Sandburg, a vocabulary list, a list of objects for students to look for when they tour the home, and ideas for discussion after the visit.

Park Ranger Dianna Miller researched and published a collection of Sandburg family recipes, *Cooking at Connemara*. She also wrote the *Big Glassy Trail Guide*, a small booklet to use while climbing Big Glassy Mountain, the highest elevation in the Park.

Two extensive uses of the collection were in the preparation of the *Historic Furnishings Report Carl Sandburg Home Main House and Swedish House* and the *Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site Cultural Landscape Report*. Fortunately for Dr. David Wallace and Ms. Susan Hart, creators of these reports, Mrs. Sandburg did not throw out old receipts, bills, letters, and canceled checks. Dr. Wallace spent months researching thousands of documents and archival photographs. He interviewed members of the Sandburg family who could confirm or correct his speculations. The furnishings report is used by Museum Staff in arranging rooms as they were in the Sandburg years and is studied by staff and volunteer interpreters.

Ms. Hart prepared the *Cultural Landscape Report* as her master's thesis for the School of Environmental Design at the University of Georgia. As Dr. Wallace had done, she thoroughly researched the files in Mrs. Sandburg's farm office and poured over flower catalogs that Mrs. Sandburg had marked. She made use of the thousands of photographs in the collection. The landscape report is now used extensively in restoring and maintaining the gardens and grounds as they were in the Sandburg years.

Through the years the Sandburg Home has loaned objects for exhibition to other museums. The Anderson Art Museum in Anderson, South Carolina, organized an exhibit on Edward Steichen, the famous photographer brother-in-law of Carl Sandburg. Steichen photographs on exhibit at Connemara were loaned along with other objects like Sandburg's eyeshade, his chair, an orange crate (used by Sandburg as furniture), and other personal objects.

At the annual meeting of the Swedish-American Society in Chicago in the early 1990s, objects from the Sandburg Home were displayed in an exhibit honoring Carl Sandburg, a first generation Swedish-American.

The museum staff researches and installs exhibits several times a year in the visitor center located in the basement of the Sandburg Home. The current exhibit centers on Sandburg's involvement in World War II. He was vigorously outspoken in favor of the war effort and believed a writer was obligated to speak to his times; he spoke out in radio speeches and at war bond rallies, wrote a syndicated newspaper column, poems, and the script for "Bomber," a national defense motion pic-

ture film on the B-26 medium bomber. He also collaborated in 1942 with his brother-in-law, Edward Steichen on "Road To Victory," a procession of photographs of the nation at war. Sandburg wrote the text for the exhibition.

Since the Sandburgs threw away very few things, the staff has a valuable source of objects to pull from the collection for exhibits. For the World War II exhibit, pages were photocopied from 1940s *Life* magazines, wartime photographs copied, and the Sandburgs' war ration books and Sandburg's books written during the war years were displayed.

Many visitors come to the Carl Sandburg Home because of an article they have read in a newspaper or magazine. Newspapers and magazines throughout the country have featured articles on the site. The Sandburg staff cooperates with and assists the writers and photographers who are preparing articles for publication.

Through the medium of television the story of Carl Sandburg has reached millions of people; two television shows presented by the Public Broadcasting System have explored the life and times of Carl Sandburg shooting much of the footage at the Sandburg Home.

Foreign crews have come from Sweden and Luxembourg to film documentaries using the site for background. A Swedish crew made a documentary on Sandburg to be shown on Swedish television. The crew from Luxembourg worked on a documentary on Edward Steichen who was born in that country. They included the Sandburg Home because of the close relationship between Steichen and Sandburg. They were "Brothers-in-law who became brothers."²

One of the most entertaining uses of Sandburg's works are the dramatic presentations given every summer in the park amphitheater by the Vagabond Workshop Theatre of the Flat Rock House Playhouse which is directly across the road from the park. Hundreds of children, most with camp counselors and others with parents, come to watch zany productions of the "Rootabaga Stories," Sandburg's American answer to European fairy tales. Screams and squeals of delight from the children fill the air on "Rootabaga" days. "The World of Carl Sandburg," more sedate but still filled with live action and music, introduces the park visitor to Sandburg's poetry and prose. There are poems about mothers, love poems, witty sayings and advice from *The People*, *Yes*, and music from *The American Songbag*. And a third summer production, "Sandburg's Lincoln," presents the story of our 16th president through his own words and those of Sandburg. It is a moving portrayal of the man who led this country through a terrible war.

Other miscellaneous items from the bookstore that have made use of the collection are a video, postcards, Carl Sandburg holographic poems, note cards, color slides, and prints of historic buildings in the Park. Other interesting items are a reproduction bookplate that Margaret Sandburg, daughter of Carl Sandburg, used in her books and a leather bookmark with the quote, "The peace of great books be for you" printed on it and on the bookplate.

Just as a carpenter uses tools in his trade, Sandburg used his library as a tool in his writing. In his lifetime, the books, magazines, newspapers, and other materials did not sit idly on shelves or table tops as evidenced by the thousands of bookmarks, dog-eared pages, and notations. The collection is carefully preserved now, so generations to come may use it just as Sandburg used it.

Though it is more than a quarter century since Carl Sandburg died, the Poet of the People,

Bard of Democracy, philosopher, historian, biographer, and troubadour still lives in the hearts and minds of the people. They will continue to write about him, read his works, and visit his home Connemara.

Notes

1. Except for several thousand books, manuscripts, journals, and letters sold to the University of Illinois by Sandburg before his death.
2. Edward Steichen, Edited and Introduction, *Sandburg: Photographers View Carl Sandburg*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1966.

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Audrey Barnhart

Using the Fort Union Trading Post Collection

Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site, North Dakota, is the site of an 1850s fur trade post, reconstructed from bare ground to its 1851 heyday. The collection includes historic archeological materials. Archeologists estimate that 1,500,000 objects will be counted when cataloging is completed.

Artifacts from every facet of life tell a side of the Fort Union story that is not recorded in journals and history books. Combs, tools, buttons, and butchered bones reveal daily life at the trading post. A series of pipe bowls from the National Clearinghouse recently filled out the series excavated on site. Prints, beadwork, trader's coats, and beaver hats are just a few of the historic artifacts acquired over the years.

The collection is used formally and informally. After washing and sorting the specimens, the Midwest Archeological Center team began analysis of each major class of artifacts found so far. A series of 10 reports, *The Fort Union Trading Post NHS (32WI17) Material Culture Reports, vol. I-IX*, studies all functional classes of artifacts found during the early excavations. This series is our primary resource for identification and classification.

Many artifacts were used to authenticate the trading post reconstruction. Window glass fragments showed the style of the hand-blown panes, where journals typically do not address such mundane matters. Strap hinges, nails, and locks found by archeologists were used when designing the reproduction.

We pulled samples of trade beads, to produce a new exhibit in our Lobby, Beads of Fort Union Trading Post. A Karl Bodmer print was sent to a photographer, to produce a working transparency. From this, the Fort Union Association will produce a poster for our visitor sales desk.

As catalogers ready the collection for World Wide Web access, we look forward to research requests from far and near.

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